



The Regional Biomass Energy Program (RBEP) promotes increased production and use of bioenergy resources, and helps advance the use of renewable biomass feedstocks and technologies. Historically, the RBEP leverages two nonfederal dollars for every federal dollar it administers.

Benefits of Ethanol Fuel Promotions

- **Increases ethanol-blended fuel use**
- **Increases public awareness of the benefits of using ethanol-blended fuels**
- **Provides an opportunity to address any consumer concerns about how vehicles operate on ethanol**
- **Supports local station operators who offer ethanol-blended fuels, and encourages other operators to offer the same**

“At our three stations, we typically gain 10-20 new customers per promotion who start coming in regularly for the E10, because they get the higher octane benefits of ethanol at no extra cost. They also like using renewable fuel because it helps our local farmers and benefits the country and environment.”

Mike Allen, Owner
Allen Oil Company



U.S. Department of Energy
Regional Biomass Energy Program

www.ott.doe.gov/rbep

ANOTHER RBEP SUCCESS: Promoting ethanol-blended fuels to consumers

CHALLENGE

Ethanol, used to add oxygen to gasoline so the fuel burns more cleanly, is blended into more than 15 percent of the nation's gasoline. This fuel blend is most commonly called “gasohol,” containing 10% ethanol, and is also called “E10.” Higher blends, such as E85 and E95, have been used successfully in government fleets, flexible-fuel vehicles, and transit buses. Gasohol — mandated by the Clean Air Act for many metro areas — and E85 are increasingly available in smaller markets, such as in the Rocky Mountains and Upper Midwest. In these areas, fleet operators and the general public need to know more about the benefits of using ethanol-blended fuels and where they are available.

RBEP SOLUTION

The U.S. Department of Energy's Regional Biomass Energy Program helps support ethanol fuel promotions by partially funding an “Ethanol Car” demonstration and promotion vehicle used at ethanol-related events. For example, at selected fuel stations offering E10 and E85, the Ethanol Car is put on display for “Yellow Dime Day” promotions where volunteers provide “full service” to customers by pumping their gas if they choose an ethanol blend for their vehicles. The volunteers also hand out literature describing the benefits of using ethanol fuels and a yellow dime for every gallon of ethanol-blended fuel the customers purchase. Local radio and television coverage is common for these promotions, and the publicity often attracts new customers.

(Photo courtesy of Ethanol Producers And Consumers.)



Partners

U.S. Department of Energy
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Ethanol Producers And Consumers
Allen Oil Company



Consumers receive a yellow dime for every gallon of ethanol-blended fuel they purchase. The color represents the yellow corn from which the ethanol is made.

Web-based Ethanol Information Resources

Ethanol Producers And Consumers
www.ethanolmt.org
National Ethanol Vehicle Coalition
www.e85fuel.com

For more information:

Jeff James
U.S. Department of Energy
Seattle Regional Office
800 5th Avenue Suite 3590
Seattle WA 98104
Phone: (206) 553-2079
Fax: (206) 553-2200
E-mail: jeffrey.james@ee.doe.gov

The promotions and publicity also help alert local fleet operators about the availability of ethanol-blended fuels. Knowing about local ethanol fuel suppliers is especially important to managers of government fleets, which have been mandated to phase in vehicles that can operate on alternative fuels. Consequently, many federal agencies have been adding flexible fuel vehicles that are capable of operating on 100% gasoline or on gasoline blends, such as E85 and E10. One such agency, the Montana Office of the General Services Administration, has based its flexible fuel vehicles in the Helena area to make use of the E85 fuel available at a nearby EZ Stop convenience store.

Ethanol Producers And Consumers (EPAC), a nonprofit ethanol fuel advocacy organization, operates the brightly decorated ethanol demonstration car. The Ethanol Car is also used to promote ethanol fuels at ethanol workshops and at local and regional fairs.

RESULTS

Station owners who carry ethanol-blended gasoline report that the Ethanol Car and Yellow Dime Day promotions help bring in hundreds of gallons of additional ethanol-blended fuel sales above an average day's sales — as well as repeat business from new customers. The promotions increase the public's awareness of the benefits of using ethanol-blended fuels and provide a means of addressing any concerns consumers might have about how well their vehicles will operate on the fuel.



BENEFITS

The Ethanol Car helps demonstrate to the public the feasibility of using blends of ethanol fuel in passenger vehicles.

The promotional events where the Ethanol Car is displayed help support local suppliers that offer ethanol-blended fuels and encourage more stations to offer the products — further improving the availability of ethanol to both the general public and area fleet operators. Furthermore, the yellow dimes distributed at the promotions circulate throughout the community an average of seven times, helping generate additional public interest in, and awareness of, ethanol-blended fuels.

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